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**CORNELIU COPOSU'S JOURNALISTIC WRITING
(1935-1947) IN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF
TWENTIETH CENTURY**

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TABLE OF CONTENT

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	11
I. THEORETICAL PART.....	14
OPINION JOURNALISM IN THE ROMANIA OF THE XIX-XX CENTURIES.....	14
I.1. The pamphlet – definion and etymology	14
I.2. Romanian pamphlets and journalists	17
I.3. Romanian pamphlet newspapers	22
II. CORNELIU COPOSU - 12 YEARS OF JOURNALISTIC ACTIVITY, FROM THE BEGGININGS TO HIS ARREST (1935-1947)	25
II. I. Corneliu Coposu’s writings in the press genres frame.....	25
III. PRACTICAL PART. CASE STUDY	31
„ROMÂNIA NOUĂ” NEWSPAPER (1935-1938)	31
III.1. Political journalist	36
Research - The image of Iuliu Maniu reflected in the Corneliu Coposu’s pamphlets	39
Sălaj county, in the eyes of the young journalist.....	41
Liberals - <i>You’ll pay someday</i>	44
External politics.....	47
III.2. Cultural journalist.....	48
The press – the most relevant mirror of our nation	49
Historical fact stories and places: Blaj and Ardeal.....	51
Arts	52
Religion – political stories.....	54
Portrets – exemples for posterity.....	55
III.3. Social journalist.....	56
The events of daily life.....	57
Obituary notice.....	60
III.4. Sports journalist.....	61
III.5. Economic journalist.....	62
Partial conclusions.....	68
IV. „ARDEALUL” NEWSPAPER - 1941-1944	72
V. „DACIA” NEWSPAPER – 1941	88
VI. „PĂMÂNTUL ROMÂNESC” MAGAZINE - 1941-1944.....	90
VII. „CALENDARUL ARDEALULUI” – 1943	93
VIII. „DREPTATEA” NEWSPAPER – 1944 și 1946.....	98
IX. „TRIBUNA” BRAȘOV NEWSPAPER - 1944.....	117

X. „TRIBUNA TRANSILVANIEI” NEWSPAPER - 1946.....	119
XI. CLARIFICATIONS „ZORILE”, „ȘANTIER”, „MESAJUL”, „CUVÂNTUL LIBER”, „UNIREA”, „CURENTUL”, „DACIA”, „CURIERUL”, „ALBA IULIA” NEWSPAPERS	122
CONCLUSIONS	128
BIBLIOGRAPHIE	133
ANNEXES	137
INTERVIEW	165
1. Rodica and Flavia Coposu interview	165
Photos - Unpublished articles.....	174
Photos	187

ABSTRACT

This paper cuts a piece from the picture of the twentieth century press and presents the evolution of the journalist Corneliu Coposu in the period between 1935, the year in which he made his debut in press, and the year of his arrest, 1947. This period is also mixed with the political activity within the PNT, therefore his writing acquires categorical political valences.

In the first chapter we show the press context of the XIX-XX'th centuries to understand the specifics of the journalistic writing of that period, par excellence a literary press, of opinion and humor.

In the second chapter we offer the interpretation framework of the articles signed by Corneliu Coposu and we identify the appropriate tools for the analysis and classification by journalistic genres of the texts signed by the journalist Corneliu Coposu. At the same time, we note the influence that Iuliu Maniu had on Corneliu Coposu's journalistic writing.

In chapters III-X we note the specifics of the articles signed by Corneliu Coposu during the 12 years of press writing, chronologically inventorying the publications to which he writes, the number of articles per publication, the topic of the articles, the author's favorite journalistic genres, all those related to the context of the press of the first half of the twentieth century, the historical, political, social and cultural context of that time.

In the 11th chapter we include a series of clarifications related to Corneliu Coposu's collaborations with the newspapers „Zorile Romaniților”, „Șantier”, „Gazeta Sălajului” („Meseșul”), „Cuvântul liber”, „Unirea”, „Alba-Iulia”, „Curierul”, „Dacia”, information that aim to bring balance and clarity in measuring his contribution in the press of that period. We also mention the publications in which he is known to have collaborated, „Curentul”, „Patria”, „Dimineața”, „Adevărul”, „Jurnalul”, „Raza”), but they did not hold the attention of this paper and it will be part of a new research project in the future.

The final part of the paper is reserved for the conclusions, bibliography, tables that summarize and order his journalistic activity, in quantitative terms, and also the supporting interview with the Corneliu Coposu's sisters Rodica and Flavia Coposu, which aims to complete the nuances of Corneliu Coposu's work. The subjective perspective, within the family, is harmoniously complemented by the perspective and scientific rigor of the historical and political research carried out by the historian Marin Pop - the monograph of the Coposu's family - which finally reveals the importance of crossing research sources. The interview with Marin Pop is not included in the *Annexes* of this paper because it has already been published in the press. Also here can be found the unique articles identified with the in-depth study of Corneliu Coposu's journalistic activity, images from interviews with the distinguished Coposu sisters, or moments captured in images from the Author's Gala at the Romanian Athenaeum, 2017.

Thus, the paper „Corneliu Coposu's journalistic writing (1935-1947) in the political context of twentieth century” assumes the responsibility to translate, through research of articles signed by Corneliu Coposu in the different stages of his evolution as a journalist, a way of reporting to the political context that marked the twentieth century. The activity of the journalist Corneliu Coposu, a journalist of „great verve and talent”, must be understood in the spirit of the journalistic preoccupations of the time and of the "political passions" of the author. The approach serves the purpose of penetrating as accurately as possible the frame that conditioned the author's writing, thematic concerns, building his own agenda and possible constraints, however present in metamorphoses and atypical texts from a journalistic point of view.

Research can thus be understood as an inference between politics and writing journalism. The reference interval is mainly between the year of 1935 and 1947, the year of his arrest, but we will pay more attention to his education, so the paper will extend until 1914, the year of Corneliu Coposu's birth in a political climate that creates the premises for his subsequent becoming both a journalist and, or especially as a politician. In order to gain a deeper understanding of Coposian writing, I went beyond the demands and constraints of informative journalistic genres and also resorted to the analysis of articles in the category of genres of opinion, such as pamphlet which, along with the interview, as a representative of the noble journalistic genres, gave voice to the revelation of confessions to the reader in a relaxed but informative style, which can become a historical and political source for readers from another era.

The articles, volumes and interviews consulted and researched were chosen based on the principles of relevance, closeness, sufficiency, concordance and completeness.

One of the main reasons for which I chose to approach this topic is the fact that until this paper there is no research that includes a scientific analysis, from a journalistic perspective, of the articles signed by Corneliu Coposu in the mentioned period, much less a paper referring to all publications in which he writes. We then proceeded to inventory the articles found in the most representative publications, which we aimed to analyze, classify thematically and by journalistic genres, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the specifics of the writing of Corneliu Coposu journalist.

The working strategy was to read the 269 articles signed by the author in the main newspapers he wrote – „România nouă”, „Ardealul”, „Dreptatea” and several other collaborations, checking the existence of articles and their inventory, chronological arranged by year and publication, analysed and explained in the context in which they appeared, an thematic classification and on journalistic genres.

The volumes about the journalistic activity of the journalist Corneliu Coposu in terms of thematic appearance, which were a real help of this paper, are the volumes „Semnele timpului”, signed by Mircea Popa, a work that thematically illustrates the different phases of Corneliu Coposu's journalism, and the volume „Corneliu Coposu – Din cele trecute vremi – jurnalist la Cluj 1935-1938”, signed by the historian Marin Pop, who inventories all the articles written by the Senior at the newspaper „România nouă”. Here, it is imperative to make

a mention. In the chapter that analyzes the journalistic activity of Corneliu Coposu in the newspaper „România nouă”, between pages 31-71 of this paper, the references in footnotes to the analyzed articles are not made to the source publication „România nouă”, but to the volume „Corneliu Coposu – Din cele trecute vremi – jurnalist la Cluj 1935-1938” (the place where I consulted the articles) which includes all these articles transcribed by the author Marin Pop and published, in the form of a volume, at the „Caiete Silvane” Publishing House. That is why there are similarities between the mentioned chapter and the website caietesilvane.ro, the site of the „Caiete Silvane” Publishing House and of the „Caiete Silvane” Culture Magazine where articles about / from this volume are published, but also articles published on related topics of the author of this paper.

Another useful works signed by the author Marin Pop, volumes that contributed to the understanding of the historical and political landscape of the period, touching tangentially the subject of Corneliu Coposu's journalistic activity, but in the interest of some historical concerns. We specify that the information found in the File of Corneliu Coposu, provided by the historian Marin Pop, the monograph of the Coposu family, was really useful. Thus, all references to the File of Corneliu Coposu, consulted by him in the Archives of the National Council for the Study of Security Archives (ACNSAS), appear regarding to the openness and availability of this researcher to whom we attribute and recognize the authorship of the File.

Some of the articles included in the analysis of this paper are available in digitized format on bcucluj.ro, and another part were scanned / digitized by the same institution, „Lucian Blaga” Central University Library Cluj-Napoca, at the request of the author of this research (reference number 1318 / 20.06.2019). Some of the items scanned on request were not framed correctly (scanned entirely), which is why some footnotes lack details about the day or page on which the invoked article is located, by here the non-uniform way of referring to certain newspaper articles in the footnotes. If the reference is normally made to the title of the newspaper, the year of publication, its number, the date of publication of the article and the page of the newspaper where the article is published, there are situations in which, because of the superficial scans, certain data are sometimes not visible or page numbers (depending on where the article was located on the page) and the date of publication of the newspaper, but the information related to the title of the newspaper, the year of publication, the issue number remain constant in all footnotes. (Examples: „Dreptatea” newspaper, 1946, no. 104, June 16 or „Dreptatea” newspaper, 1946, no. 105).

I also mention the fact that the possible similarities identified by the anti-plagiarism software between certain quotations used in this paper (faithfully taken from Corneliu Coposu's articles, as an example or for analysis, commentary, but shown with the title of the article: author, because all the analyzed articles in this paper belong to Corneliu Coposu (publication name, year of publication, possibly page number), and the text that can be easily identified by software by digitization as similarity, does not represent a fraud in the opinion of the author of this paper and not only (see D. Isoc, 2012, p. 171, Rule 9.5), since there is an express reference to the article

from which those quotes came. For clarity, the number from the shoulder of the word was positioned after the title of the analyzed article.

Moreover, the content analysis applied to the articles signed by Corneliu Coposu justifies and involves certain fragments of text („creative pieces”, an expression belonging to Dorin Isoc), marked as such, which aim to restore the style of Corneliu Coposu, but also to strengthen or complete certain interpretive conclusions of the author of this paper. (see D. Isoc, 2012, Guide to action against plagiarism, p. 17, Art. 33, 1. letter B) and 4.). It should also be noted that in reading the quotes we established that the transcription should be done taking into account the current transcription rules, updated, thus giving up the archaic or outdated forms of some terms.

The originality of this paper is the explanation of the context in which Corneliu Coposu wrote various articles, the structuring of articles by journalistic genres, the correction of erroneous data and the clarification of the situation of some publications in which he did not write (or did not write during some specific period), the revelation of some unpublished articles, but also the revelation of some information from his Tracking File (provided by the historian Marin Pop) which, correlated with the information found in the articles, offers a realistic and complete perspective of the political landscape of the last century.

The conclusions of this paper show the nature of journalism practiced by Corneliu Coposu, starting from the intersection of the results of the qualitative analysis with the quantitative one.

Regarding the research methodology, this paper designs the research in two stages. In the first stage we collected the information, in this case, the articles that were subjected to analysis through content analysis, the most appropriate research method according to the needs of this paper. We already point out the absolutely indispensable quantitative component of the second stage, the qualitative one, in which the actual analysis was performed.

In this second stage we used deductive methods, interpretation and contextualization to propose a more comprehensive approach to understanding the nature of Corneliu Coposu's articles and the reasons why he writes what he writes. Thus, the first stage, the quantitative one, served as the basis for the second stage, the analysis of the collected data, in order to investigate in depth and detail the corpus of data. The analysis of the documents was completed by the interview and the research already published on the same subject. We also proceeded to identify a unitary scheme that would serve to analyze the whole corpus data, a process that involves the interpretation, understanding, personal vision of the analyzed information of the subject under investigation.

The paper also proposes testing the research hypothesis as a validation or invalidation of the initial vision related to the subject. In the present case, after a whole process of critical interrogation, analysis and interpretation, the hypothesis has been confirmed. Of course, exploratory checks were used along the way to determine the accuracy of the pilot data collected by other researchers who addressed the same topic, namely, randomly testing a set of articles and publication to establish the fidelity regarding the accuracy of the press articles, therefore the appearance of original articles about which there were no references until this paper. The

challenge came with the assumption of the qualitative method, which not only captured the events reported in the press articles, in their reality, but also aimed to explain why and how it was written, looking carefully at the political context that conditioned the appearance of the articles. The results of the analysis are analyzed to the cause-effect relationship, giving the specifics of the first decades of the twentieth century press.

The objectives of the paper were to radiograph Corneliu Coposu's journalistic activity, in a certain period of time, still relevant for his entire journalistic career, but beyond discovering the reasons behind the writings, was the understanding of the subject's way of thinking and attitudes towards concrete events. What I understand to be useful, necessary and achievable in the future is the mixing research verdicts of several specialists in different fields, complementary researchers in vision and skills, and here I refer to combining the work of a journalist with that of a historian or political scientist.

The interpretation of data was made by reporting the articles published in the historical-political context of the interwar period, the one established during the Second World War and immediately after its end, until the author's arrest in 1947, even if the author journalistic activity continues after the 1989 Revolution.

Each chapter of this paper contains partial conclusions, helpful for a more accurate understanding of each stage of Corneliu Coposu's journalistic activity. These conclusions aim to provide an identity of the chapter, very helpful in drawing the general final conclusions. Only the press articles signed by Corneliu Coposu between 1935-1947 caught the attention of this paper. The two interviews (with the historian Marin Pop, published in „Caiete Silvane” Magazine and with Coposu's sisters, present in *Annexes*) aim to complete the rigid spectrum of processed information, in the sense of completing the information, explaining the relationship between the author and his writing, author and Iuliu Maniu - his political mentor, between the author and the political power, while offering an answer related to the reasons behind some collaborations with certain publications, finding that, for example, that the author also wrote for financial reasons, which indicates financially problems for PNT compared to other parties, even if he was a party member, political secretary, personal secretary of Iuliu Maniu. Moreover, the references to Marin Pop's interview are meant to offer a historical perspective about the writings of Corneliu Coposu, but also to give the context of certain political events to which the author referred to in his articles. The more I delved into it, the more I have found a series of information that if they were not inaccurate, they were completely wrong, which is why it was imperative to interrogate, validate or invalidate some references related to Corneliu Coposu's contribution on newspapers.

Thus, we inventoried the newspaper and the year in which the author writes, but the analysis was made only to the most relevant publications to which he signed articles in the period 1935-1947. The rest of the unanalyzed newspapers will be part of a future research.

The research questions around to which I built the whole paper were:

1. How much, where, when and how does Corneliu Coposu write in those 12 years of press?
2. How does journalistic and political activity interfere?

3. What are the author's favorite thematic directions and journalistic genres?

The hypothesis from which we started the investigation was the presumption that the journalist Coposu made a party activity press. In this research, we used as bibliographic resources a series of research in the field of communication and press to guarantee a scientific verdict to this analysis of the articles. The criteria for selecting the materials consulted were, first of all, their relevance in accordance with the topic, relevance and proximity to the period covered, the angle of approach and the suitability of the challenges proposed by this paper. The method of consulting the materials was reading.

The way the materials were processed was interpreting, quoting, paraphrasing, explaining, contextualization.

Among the limits of the research we note the lack of in-depth research, from the journalistic perspective, on the journalistic activity of Corneliu Coposu, which should be able to encourage, adjust, strengthen or complete the perspective of this paper.

This paper is focused on the context of the interwar literary press proposing an inter and transdisciplinary approach. For a pertinent interpretation of data and for a better scientific accuracy, the methods of text analysis were crossed. Thus, we have combined both qualitative and quantitative methods, an attitude that serves as a precaution against the urge to identify „experience” with „authenticity”. The aim was not only to reproduce those fragments (of text, publications, working methods) that supported the argument of this paper, but also to keep awake a critical tension on the body of data.

Keeping that on mind, I answered the most pressing questions related to the methodology of this paper: What is the research hypothesis? How do we measure results? How big is the corpus data we're working on? What is the working tool? How do we interpret the results? At the end of this paper we admit that we operated an in-depth and persuasive analysis, giving the work also an exegetical character.

A unique aspect of this paper is the use of a standardized way of analyzing and interpreting texts that ensures an important coefficient of safety against the results, useful for all researchers who want to explore the subject of another journalist activity. On this paper I chose a critical approach to firmly distinguish between interpretation and fact data, and therefore methods according to the research questions.

Corneliu Coposu's journalistic activity assume several well-established points. The first would be the chronological arrangement of the newspapers in which he writes during the 12 years targeted. Thus, we conclude that from his beginnings as journalist 1935, until the year of his arrest, 1947, Coposu writes in 8 newspapers, of which 3 are main in terms of the number of articles published and the period in which he writes for that newspaper. The three newspapers are chronologically „România nouă” 1935-1938 (188 articles), „Ardealul” 1941-1944 (35 articles) and „Dreptatea” 1944 and 1946 (31 articles), with more than 90% of the total articles (269) published and analyzed. He had collaborations, confirmed by this paper, with several newspapers such as: „Pământul românesc”, „Tribuna” Braşov, „Tribuna Transilvaniei”, „Dacia”, „Curierul” and, last but not least, „Calendarul

Ardealului” (1943) of which he is a member of the leading committee. Even so to this newspaper he does not have a numerous publishing activity, signing only 4 articles. To this newspaper he denies one of the articles signed by his name.

There are also some bibliographic references, but also mentions in the ACNSAS File, provided by the historian Marin Pop, as he had collaborated with other newspapers. We save space to show them, however, they have not been the subject of the analysis of this paper, for a number of objective reasons, including the fact that the number of articles referred to is extremely small. We remind, therefore, the inventory of newspapers to which are direct references that it would have written to: „Patria” Cluj-Napoca, „Cuvântul” (T. Enacovici), „Șantierul”, „Dimineața”. We also considered it necessary to clarify any errors or inaccurate information regarding his contribution to certain newspapers, invalidate his activity at certain temporary intervals (see the „Clarifications” section).

By completing this paper, we were able to answer the research questions stated at the beginning of the paper:

1. Corneliu Coposu signs 269 articles, in 8 newspapers, during the 12 years of press activity, 1935-1947. The most important newspapers in terms of the number of signed articles and the period of time in which they work for the same newspaper are: „România nouă” (1935-1938, 188 articles), „Ardealul” (1941-1944, 35 articles) and „Dreptatea” (1944-1946, 31 articles). He has collaborations with the newspapers „Pământul românesc” (1941-1944, 3 articles), „Tribuna” Brașov (1944, 3 articles), „Tribuna Transilvaniei” (1946, 2 articles), „Dacia” (1941, 1 article), „Calendarul Ardealului” (1943, 3/4? Articles), „Curierul”, articles analyzed in this paper, but also with the newspapers that appear in the same period, „Patria” Cluj-Napoca, „Cuvântul” (T. Enacovici), „Șantier”, „Dimineața”, „Adevărul”, „Raza”, „Alba Iulia”, „Jurnalul”, „Curentul”, the latter not entering into the analysis of this paper due to the experience of finding that, in the publications, generally publishes articles already published before in one of the three main newspapers. Corneliu Coposu also writes after 1989 for the „Dreptatea”, „Magazin istoric” and „Contemporanul”. Instead, the publications in which I concluded that he did not write, following their investigation, are: „Zorile”, „Șantier”, „Mesajul” Zalău, „Cuvântul liber”, „Unirea” (see details in the „Clarifications” section). During this 12-year period, the young journalist is a party press supporter of the National Peasant Party.

2. Corneliu Coposu combines the journalistic activity from the targeted interval, when censorship allowed, with political affinity for PNT and Iuliu Maniu. As he declares during his journalistic activity, he did not hold any incompatibility responsibilities, but by his writing, and the constant exercise of incisiveness he was recognized as a vector of opinion of the PNT. Corneliu Coposu does not write too much, if we assume the imprudence of comparing his activity to the journalistic quantity of writings of the moment. Estimate, an employed journalist writes at least 300 articles a year, but we cannot compare the size of today's media, the

accessibility of online media support, the big number of journalists (and in general, unprofessionals), not to mention the quality of the subjects, with the situation of the interwar press.

The journalists of the time were writers, elites who wrote in newspapers to train the evolution of language and journalism in an evolutionary phase. Journalism became professional after the 1989 Revolution, when the first Faculties of Journalism appeared and, thus, the professionalization of media employees, the diversification of the media, but also the first researchers concerned with studying the press.

We also mention the fact that before the War there was no tradition of journalistic education, and timid forms of training for journalists appeared after 23rd of August 1944, but they were „Reserved” for the communist press in which people with 4 classes learned. About these Corneliu Coposu also speaks in his articles, but ironically concludes that these training courses has ended before at least a decent literacy of the people involved.

3. The dominant journalistic genres in the activity of Corneliu Coposu are the opinion ones, with emphasis on comments and pamphlets.

The favorite topics are those that target the area of politics and forecast the moments historical issues that followed: issues related to and in Ardeal, the moment of 30 August 1940, the issue of alliances in the Second World War from the perspective of Romania's interest, and the defense of Romanian territories acquired in 1918, liberal government and opposition, the three dictatorships, press censorship, the invocation of political and cultural figures with a role in various branches of knowledge, the establishment of the communist regime and the struggle against anti-democratic values, a regime he said was „a utopia that seduced many intellectuals”.

The research hypothesis from which we started the research came true during the research, namely the fact that the journalist Coposu practiced party journalism, which from opposition, followed the political games, assuming the role of „guard dog of democracy”, defender of freedom of expression. In fact, the most intense nuance of his journalistic activity is politics.

Keywords: Corneliu Coposu, press, politics, xxth century, pamphlet